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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION

Irish Potatoes

OCTOBER 21 through NOVEMBER 6, 1943
All States and the District of Columbia

A VICTORY FOOD SELECTION

FOR USE AFTER OCTOBER 14, 1943

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Consumers may expect the largest supply of Irish potatoes this fall and winter they've ever had. Latest crop reports indicate that farmers will turn out an all-time record crop this year--460 million bushels--89 million more than last year. Most of this increase will be in the late crop.

Every bushel of these potatoes will be needed to meet civilian and military demands. The very size of the crop, however, creates serious problems of marketing and distribution. Fullest cooperation of producers, distributors, processors, and consumers is needed in the months ahead if the crop is to be fully utilized.

To help stimulate consumption and home storage of potatoes during harvest season, the War Food Administration has designated Irish potatoes as a Nationwide Victory Food Selection during October 21 through November 6, 1943.

A major problem in handling the potato crop this year is storage. Commercial storage has been increased but is still inadequate to handle the huge supply. Storage must be found outside the producing areas for about 50 million bushels of potatoes. Homemakers can help this situation tremendously by storing a bushel or more.

Of course, it will be patriotic to eat more potatoes during harvest time, too, since this will take pressure off less abundant foods and help ease the storage problem.

Storage at home is a thrifty practice for any family with suitable facilities. This isn't hoarding. It's helping get the crop under cover before bad weather sets in. About all that's

needed is a place where the temperature stays between 40 and 60 degrees. A cellar, closet, back porch, or garage will do. Potatoes should not be stored in the light, since this causes them to turn greenish and taste bitter. A cloth covering, paper, or a bag is enough to shut out light.

IRISH potatoes should not be allowed to freeze, or they will spoil. and if potatoes are kept below 40 degrees for any length of time some of their starch turns to sugar, causing a sweetish taste. This may be eliminated by keeping the potatoes in a warmer place for about a week before they are used. The sugar will turn back to starch and the natural flavor return.

Potatoes should be carefully inspected for decay before storing, and all decayed potatoes removed. Badly bruised or cracked potatoes should be segregated and used first, since they will not keep well. Several hundred pounds of potatoes can be stored with safety under the above conditions. Fifty to 100 pounds can usually be

Victory Food Selection is Uncle Sam's way of saying, "Here is a food that is abundant now. So that none of it will go to waste, use it freely, but use it wisely." Food is a powerful weapon, and Americans have more of it than any other people now at war. That's because our farmers have done an amazing job of breaking production records in spite of serious handicaps. Occasionally marketing, storage, and processing facilities are overtaxed in handling these huge crops. Then producers, handlers, consumers, and Government must make extra efforts to move the crop from farm to table without waste. The *Victory Food Selection* is an instrument for focusing attention on these plentiful foods at the height of the season when prices are generally lowest. Workers in such fields as radio, press, advertising, trade, education, club work, and Government are urged to do all they can to help make these campaigns successful.

stored in a kitchen bin for a month to 6 weeks without spoiling. The Department of Agriculture has information on storage in backyard barrels or pits for those having no other suitable place.

The largest crop on record means plenty of Irish potatoes for wartime meals. For more families than usual, potatoes will appear on breakfast, dinner, and supper tables--and with good reason, considering their high batting average on the food value score.

Points to bear in mind in buying potatoes: Mealy kinds are good for baking and mashing. Waxy varieties are better for salads and for creaming. Jumbo sizes are best for baking; medium-sized ones are preferred for most purposes.

Under and within the jacket of the Irish potato are important food values--a good part of the day's need for Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) if potatoes take the prominent place they deserve in wartime meals; some Vitamin B₁ (thiamine) too; and iron and some other important minerals. Well known as a starchy vegetable, potatoes are a good energy food. And they provide some vegetable protein as well. All in all, potatoes more than pay their way in the food values they offer.

Homemakers should get the good from potatoes--bake them, boil them in their jackets, eat the brown skins. If they must be pared, pare thin. Pare them just before they're cooked. Don't soak them, or minerals and vitamins are lost. And use the liquid in which pared potatoes are cooked, it contains food values.

In preparing potatoes, variety is the spice, simplicity the goal. "With jackets on" is the rule for good eating and most food value. The potato should stand on its own laurels. Save time, money, and scarcer ingredients by serving potatoes *unadorned* most often.

Here's the way to have the perfect baked potato: Wash and dry potatoes of as nearly the same size as possible. Put into a medium-hot oven and bake until tender--40 to 60 minutes. For soft skin, rub a little fat on the potato before putting it in the oven. Save fuel by baking while other foods are being oven-cooked. Cook with any baked dish except one calling for a

very slow or very hot oven. After cooking, cut criss-cross gashes in the skin on one side. Then pinch the potato so some of the soft inside part pops up through the broken skin. Drop in meat drippings, bits of crisp-fried salt pork, butter, or other table fat.

For an extra special, cut large baked potatoes in half, scoop out the soft part, mash, and season with fat, hot milk, and salt. Stuff back into the potato shells, brush the top with fat, and brown in the oven.

Just as good as baked potatoes, and maybe even better in food value, are potatoes boiled in the jacket. Scrub medium-sized potatoes and drop them into a kettle of salted, boiling water--enough to cover the potatoes. Cook until tender and drain at once so they won't get waterlogged. Serve in the jacket, or peel and season with salt and meat drippings or other fat.

Some cold day, try quick potato soup, with 2 cups of raw potatoes, 2 tablespoons of fat, 1 tablespoon of chopped onion, 1 quart of milk, 1½ teaspoons of salt, and pepper to taste. Chop the potatoes fine or grate them. Add potatoes, fat and onion to milk. Cook the mixture over low heat until the potatoes are tender. By that time the starch from the potatoes will have thickened the milk slightly. Add salt and pepper.

An old favorite is fried potatoes, country style. Pare enough raw potatoes to make a quart when sliced thin or chopped fine. Put in a frying pan with 2 tablespoons meat drippings or other fats. Brown a little chopped onion in the fat, if you like. Cover the frying pan closely and cook the potatoes over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes. When they are browned on the bottom, turn them with a knife to brown the other side.

And for a change from the old stand-bys, there's potato puff, or potato hot-pot. And for potato left-overs there are hash browned potatoes, potato salad (hot or cold), creamed potatoes, shepherd's pie, and all the other good ways to use cooked potatoes--some family favorites, some forgotten.

The Irish potato is an all-American vegetable, and a mighty good one to have around in plentiful supply.

A leaflet, POTATOES IN LOW-COST MEALS, is available from the FDA in small quantities free of charge to anyone wanting to give away recipes and cooking hints. (This leaflet is out-dated in its references to the Food Stamp Plan and the Agricultural Marketing Administration, but the information is still mighty good.)

September 25, 1943

DESIGNATION OF IRISH POTATOES
as a
VICTORY FOOD SELECTION

PERIOD: OCTOBER 21 THROUGH NOVEMBER 6, 1943

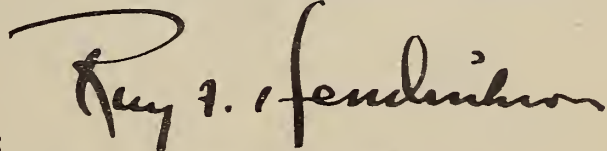
AREA: ALL STATES AND DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

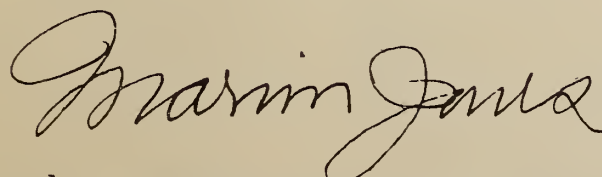
Irish potatoes are hereby designated as a Victory Food Selection for the period October 21 through November 6, 1943.

Farmers were asked to increase production of potatoes this year, and in spite of wartime handicaps they have made the largest crop in history. This is an achievement of which every American should be proud. Every bushel of these potatoes is needed to help meet the requirements of our fighting forces and civilian population. Nevertheless, the very size of the enormous crop makes it necessary for the grower, the food trade, the consumer, and the Government to unite in a vigorous program of use and conservation during the harvest season, to prevent waste of any part of the crop. Storage of potatoes on farms and in commercial houses must be pushed to the utmost. Storage of potatoes in homes must be encouraged. And large quantities of potatoes must be consumed during the late fall months, relieving some of the pressure on less abundant foods.

During the period stated above, all food merchants, eating places, distributors, advertisers, and channels of public information in every State of the Union and the District of Columbia are authorized and are urged to feature Irish potatoes as a Victory Food Selection in advertising, display material, and messages to the public, focusing consumer attention on the seasonal abundance of this crop. Use of the official Victory Food Selection emblem is also authorized where it is clearly intended to promote the sale of Irish potatoes.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION

By: 
Director


Approved: _____
War Food Administrator

